A

SEASONABLE SPEECH,

MADE

By a worthy Member of PARLIAMENT in the Houſe of Commons,

Concerning the Other Houſe.

March 1659.

Mr. *Speaker*,

THis daies Debate is but too clear a proof that we Engliſhmen are right Iſlanders, Variable and Mutable like the Air we live in. For (Sir) if that were not our temper, We ſhould not be now Diſputing, Whether after all thoſe hazards we have run, That bloud We have ſpilt, That Treaſure We have exhauſted, we ſhould not now ſit down, juſt where we did begin; and of our own accords ſubmit our ſelves to that Slavery, which we have not only ventured our Eſtates and Lives, but I wiſh I could not ſay, Our Souls and Conſciences, to throw off. What others (Sir) think of this Levity, I cannot tell, I mean thoſe that ſteer their Conſciences by occaſions, and cannot loſe the honour they never had: But truly (Sir) for my own part, I dare as little not declare it to be my Opinion, as others more prudential dare avow it to be theirs, That we are this day making good all the reproaches of our Enemies, owning of our ſelves Oppreſſors, Murderers, Regicides, Subverters of that, which now we do not only acknowledge to have been a lawful Government; but by recalling it, confeſs it now to be the beſt: Which (Sir) if it be true, and that we now begin to ſee aright, I heartily wiſh, our eyes had been ſooner open; and for three Nations ſake, that we had purchas'd our Conviction at a cheaper rate. We might (Sir) in *Fourty two*, have been, what we thus contend to be in *Fifty nine*; and our Conſciences have had much leſs to anſwer for to God, and our Reputations to the World.

But Mr. *Speaker*, I wiſh with all my ſoul, I did ſtate our Caſe to you amiſs, and that it were the Queſtion only, Whether we would voluntarily relapſe into the diſeaſe we were formerly poſſeſſed with, and of our own accords take up our old yoke, that we with wearing and cuſtom had made habitual and eaſie, and which (it may be) 'twas more our wantonneſs then our preſſure, that made us throw it off. But this (Sir) is not now the Queſtion: that which we deliberate, is not, Whether we will ſay we do not care to be free, we like our old Maſters, and will now be content to have our ears bored at the door poſts of their houſe, and ſo ſerve them for ever; But (Sir) as if we were contending for ſhame as well as ſervitude, we are carrying our *ears to be bored* at the doors of *an Other Houſe*: A Houſe (Sir) without Name, and therefore it is but con-

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gruous it should consist of Members without family: A House that inverts the Order of Slavery, and subjects it to our Servants; and yet, in contradiction to Scripture, we do not only not think that subjection intolerable, but are now pleading for it. In a word, Sir, It is a House of so incongruous and odious a composition and mixture, that certainly the grand Architect would never have so framed it, had it not been his design as well to shew to the world *the contempt he had of us*, as to demonstrate *the power he had over us*.

Sir, That it may appear, that I intend not to be so prudent, (as far as my part is concerned) as to make a voluntary Resignation of my Liberty and Honour to this excellent part of his late Highness his last Will and Testament, I shall crave (Sir) the leave to declare in a few particulars my Opinion of this Other House: wherein I cannot but promise my self to be favourably heard by some, but patiently heard by all: For those Englishmen that are against this House, will certainly with content hear the Reasons why others are so too; those Courtiers that are for it, give me evidence enough to think that in nature there is nothing which they cannot willingly endure.

First (Sir) As to the Author and Framer of this House of Peers; Let me put you in mind, it was He, that with reiterated Oaths, had often *sworn to be true and faithful to the Government without it*: and not only sworn so himself, but had been the chief Instrument both to draw and compel others to swear so too. So (Sir) that the foundation of this Noble Fabrick was laid in Perjury, and was begun with the violation and contempt, as well of the Laws of God, as of the Nation. He (Sir) that call'd Monarchy *Antichristian* in another, and indeed made it so in himself: He that Voted a House of Lords *dangerous and unnecessary*, and too truly made it so in his Partisans: He that with fraud and force deprived you of your Liberty when he was living, and entailed Slavery upon you at his death: 'tis He (Sir) that hath left you these worthy Overseers of that his last Will and Testament; Who, however they have behaved themselves in other trusts, we may be confident they will endeavour faithfully to discharge themselves in this. In a word (Sir) had this Other House no other fault but its Institution and Author, I should think that original sin enough for its condemnation: For I am of their opinion that think, that for the good of example, all Acts and Monuments of Tyrants are to be expunged, and erased, that if possible their memory might be no longer liv'd then their carcasses. And the truth is, their good Laws are of the number of their Snares, and but base Brokage for our Liberty.

But Sir, to impute to this Other House no other faults but its own, you may please in the first place to consider of the power which his Highness hath left it, according to that *humble Petition and Advice*, which he was pleased to give order to the Parliament to present unto him. For (Sir) as the Romans had Kings, so had his Highness Parliaments amongst his Instruments of slavery; And I hope (Sir) it will be no offence for me to pray that his Son may not have them so too. But (Sir) they have a *Negative Voice*, and all other circumstances of that Arbitary Power, which made

made the former House intolerable; only the Dignity, and quality of the persons themselves is wanting, that our slavery may be accompanied with ignominy and affront. And now (Mr. *Speaker*) have we not gloriously vindicated the Nations Liberty? have we not worthily imployed our Bloud and Treasure to abolish that Power that was set over us by the Law, to have the same impos'd upon us without a Law? And after all that sound and noise we have made in the World, of the Peoples Legislative Power, and of the Supremacy and Omnipotency of their Representatives; we now see there is no more power left them, but what is put in the balance, and equalled by the power of a few retainers of Tyranny, who are so far from being of the Peoples choice, that the most part of them are only known to the Nation by the villanies and mischiefs they have committed in it.

In the next place (Sir) you may please to consider that the persons invested with this power, are all of them nominated and designed by the Lord Protector (for to say, *by him and his Council*, hath in effect no more distinction, then if one should say, *by Oliver, and Cromwel.*) By this means the Protector himself, by his own and his Peers Negative, becomes in effect two of the three Estates; and by consequence, is possest of two parts of the Legislative Power. I think this can be a doubt to no man, that will but take the pains to read over that fair Catalogue of those Noble Lords: for certainly no man that reads their names, can possibly fancy for what other vertues or good qualities such a composition should be made choice of, but only the certainty of their compliance with whatsoever should be enjoyned them by their *Creator*. (Pardon Sir that name, for 'tis properly appliable, where things are made of nothing.) Now (Sir) if in the former Government, encrease of Nobility was a grievance, because the new Nobility, having fresh obligation to the Crown, were the easilier led to compliance with it: And if one of the main Reasons for exclusion of the Bishops out of the House of Lords, was because that they being of the Kings making, were in effect so many certain Votes for whatever the King had a mind to carry in that House: how much more assured will that inconvenience now be, when the Protector, that wants nothing of the King, but, in every sense the Title, shall not only make and nominate a part, but of himself constitute the whole House? In a word (Sir) if our Liberty was endangered by the former House, we may give it lost in the Other House; And 'tis in all respects as advantagious and secure for the Liberty of the Nation, which we come hither to redeem, to allow this power and notion to his Highness Officers, or Council, nay his very Chaplains, as to his other creatures and partisans in his Other House.

Now having considered (Sir) their Author, Power, and Constitution, give me leave to make some few Observations, though but in general, of the Persons themselves that are designed to be our Lords and Masters, and let us see what either the extraordinary quality or qualifications are of these egregious Legislators, which may justifie their choice, and prevail with the People to admit them, at least, into equal Authority with the whole Representative Body of themselves. But what I shall speak

(*Sir*) of their quality, or any thing elſe concerning them, I would be thought to ſpeak with diſtinction, and to intend only of the Major Part. For I acknowledge, Mr. *Speaker*, the mixture of this Other Houſe to be like the Compoſitions of Apothecaries, who are us'd to mix ſomething of reliſh, ſomething grateful to the Taſte, to qualifie their bitter Drugs, which elſe, perchance, would be immediately ſpit out, and never ſwallowed. So (*Sir*) His Highneſs, of deplorable memorie to this Nation, to countenance as well the want of quality as honeſty in the reſt, hath nominated ſome, againſt whom there lies no other Reproach, but onely that Nomination; but not (*Sir*) out of any reſpect to their Qualities, or regard to their Vertues, but with regard to the no Qualitie, to the no Vertues of the reſt: which truly (Mr. *Speaker*) if he had not done, we could eaſily have given a more expreſs Name to his Other Houſe, then he hath been pleaſed to do. For we know a Houſe deſign'd onely for Beggers and Malefactors, is *a Houſe of Correction*, and term'd ſo by your Law. But (Mr. *Speaker*) ſetting thoſe few Perſons aſide, who I hope think the Nomination a diſgrace, and the ever coming to ſit there, much a greater: Can we without Indignation think on the reſt? He that's firſt in their Roll, a condemn'd Coward, one that out of fear and baſeneſs did once what he could to betray your Liberties, and does now the ſame for gain. The ſecond, a Perſon of as little ſence as honeſty, prefer'd for no other reaſon but his no Worth, his no Conſcience; except that his cheating his Father of all he had, was thought a vertue, by him, who by ſad experience, we finde hath done as much for his Mother, his Country. The third, a Cavalier, a Presbyterian, an Independent; for a Republique, for a Protector, for every thing, for nothing, but onely that one thing, *Money*. 'Twere endleſs to run through them all, to tell you (*Sir*) of their Lordſhips of ſeventeen pound Land a year of inheritance; of their Farmer Lordſhips, Dray-men Lordſhips, Cobler Lordſhips, without one foot of Land, but what the blood of Engliſh men hath been the price of; theſe (Sir) are to be our Rulers, theſe the Judges of our Lives and Fortunes; to theſe we are to ſtand bare, whilſt their pageant ſtage Lordſhips daign to give us a conference upon their Breeches. Mr. *Speaker*, we have already had too much experience, how unſupportable Servants are, when they become our Maſters: All kinde of Slavery is miſerable in the accompt of all generous Mindes; but that which comes accompanied with Scorn and Contempt, ſtirs every Mans Indignation, and is indured by none, whom Nature does not intend for Slaves, as well as Fortune.

I ſay not this (Mr. *Speaker*) to revile any man with his meanneſs; for I never thought either the Malignity or Indulgence of Fortune, to be (with wiſe or juſt Men) the grounds either of their ill or their good Opinion. Mr. *Speaker*, I blame not in theſe Men the faults of their Fortune, any otherwiſe but as they make them their own: I object to you their Poverty, becauſe it is accompanied with Ambition; I minde you of their Qualitie, becauſe they themſelves forget it. So that 'tis not the Men I am angry with, but with their Lorſhips; not with Mr. *Barkſtead*, or Mr. *Goaler* (Titles I could well allow him) but with *The*

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Right Honourable, our ſingular good Lord and Goaler : 'Tis this incongruity (Mr. *Speaker*) I am diſpleaſed with.

So (Sir) that though we eaſily grant Poverty and Neceſſity to be no faults, yet we muſt allow them to be great Impediments in the way of Honour, and ſuch as nothing but extraordinary Vertue and Merit can well remove. The Scripture reckons it among *Jeroboams* great faults, that *he made prieſts of the meaneſt of the people* ; and ſure it was none of the Vertues of our *Jeroboam* (who hath ſet up his Calves too, and would have our Tribes come up and worſhip them) that he obſerved the ſame Method, in making of Lords.

One of the few Requeſts the Portugals made to *Philip* the Second of *Spain*, when he got that Kingdom (as His late Highneſs did this) by an Army, was, *That he would not make Nobility contemptible, by advancing ſuch to that Degree, whoſe quality or vertue could be no way thought to deſerve it.* Nor have we formerly been leſs apprehenſive of ſuch inconveniencies our ſelves ; it was in *Ric.* 1's time, one of the Biſhop of *Ely's* Accuſations, that Caſtles and Forts of truſt he did *Obſcuris & ignotis hominibus tradere*, put in the hands of obſcure and unknown Men : But We (Mr. *Speaker*) to ſuch a kind of Men are delivering up the Power of our Laws, and in that the power of All.

In the 17 *Edw.*4. there paſt an Act of Parliament, for the degrading of *John Nevil* Marqueſs *Mountague* and Duke of *Bedford* ; the reaſon expreſt in the Act, *Becauſe he had not a Revenue ſufficient for the maintaining of that Dignity* ; to which was added, *That when men of mean birth are called to high Eſtate, and have no livelihood to ſupport it, it induceth Briberies, Extortions, and all kindes of injuſtices that are followed by gain.* And in the Parliament of 2. *Carol.* the Peers in a Petition againſt Scotiſh and Iriſh Titles, told the King, *That 'tis a Novelty without Preſident, That Men ſhould poſſeſs Honours, where they poſſeſs nothing elſe* ; *and that they ſhould have a Vote in Parliament, where they have not a foot of Land.* But if it had been added, Sir, *Or have no Land but what is the purchaſe of their Villanies*, againſt how many of our new Peers had this been an important Objection ? To conclude (Sir) It hath been a very juſt and reaſonable care, amongſt all Nations, not to render that deſpis'd and contemptible to the People, which is deſign'd for their Reverence, and their Awe : Which (Sir) bare and empty Title, without quality or vertue, never procured any man, any more then the Image in the Fable made the Aſs adored that carried it.

Afrer their quality, give me leave (Sir) to ſpeak a word or two of their qualifications ; which certainly ought in reaſon to carry ſome proportion with the employments they deſign themſelves. The Houſe of Lords (Sir) are our Kings Hereditary great Councils : they are the Higheſt Court of Judicature ; they have their part in Judging and Determining of the Reaſons of Making new Laws, and of abrogating old : From amongſt them we take our great Officers of State ; they are commonly our Generals at Land, and our Admirals at Sea : In concluſion (Sir) they are both of the Eſſence and Conſtitution of our old Government ; and have beſides, the greateſt and nobleſt ſhare in the Adminiſtation.

Now certainly (Sir) to judge according to the Dictates of Reason, one would imagine some small Faculties and Endowments to be necessary for the discharging of such a Calling; and those such as are not usually acquired in shops and ware-houses, nor found by following the Plough: Now what other Academies most of their Lordships have been bred in, but their Shops; what other Arts they have been versed in, but those which more require good Arms and good Shoulders, then good Heads, I think (Mr. *Speaker*) we are yet to be informed. Sir, we commit not the Education of our Children to Ignorant and Illiterate Masters; Nay, we trust not our very Horses to unskilful Grooms: I beseech you (Sir) let Us think it belongs to Us to have some Care into whose Hands We commit the management of the Commonwealth: And if we cannot have Persons of Birth and Fortune to be our Rulers, to whose quality we would willingly submit; I beseech you (Sir) for our Credits and Safeties sake, let us seek men (at least) of Parts and Education, to whose Abilities we may have some reason to give way. If Sir, a Patient dies under a Physicians hand, the Law esteems that not a Felony, but a misfortune in the Physician; but if one that is no Physician undertakes the management of a Cure, and the Party miscarries; the Law makes the Emperique a Felon, and sure in all Mens opinon the Patient a Fool. To conclude (Sir) for Great Men to govern 'tis ordinary; for Able Men 'tis natural; Knaves many times come to it by Force and Necessity, and Fools sometimes by Chance: But universal Choice and Electon of Fools and Knaves for Government, was never yet made by any who were not themselves like those they chose.

But methinkes (Mr. *Speaker*) I see ready to rise after me, some Gentleman that shall tell you the great services that their new Lordships have done the Commonwealth; that shall extol their Valour, their Godliness, their Fidelity to the Cause; The Scripture too (no dobut) as 'tis to all purposes, shall be brought in to argue for them; and we shall hear of the *Wisdom of the poor man that saved the City*, of the *not many wise, not many mighty*; Attributes I can no way deny to be due to their Lordships. Mr. *Speaker*, I shall be as forward as any man to declare their services, and acknowledge them; though I might tell you, that the same honour is not purchas'd by the bloud of an Enemy, and of a Citizen; that for Victories in civil Wars, till our Armies march through the City, I have not read that the Conquerours have been so void of shame as to Triumph. *Cæsar*, not much more indulgent to his Country, then our late Protector, did not so much as write publique Letters of his Victory at *Pharsalia*, much less had daies of Thanksgiving to his gods, and Anniversary feasts for having been a prosperous Rebel, and given Justice and his Country the worst.

But Sir, I leave this Argument, and to be as good as my word, come to put you in mind of some of their services, and the obligation you owe them for the same. To speak nothing (Sir) of one of my Lords Commissioners valour at *Bristol*, nor of another Noble Lords brave adventure at the Bear-Garden; I must tell you Sir, that most of them have had the courage to do things, which (I may boldly say) few other Christians dur st

durſt have ſo adventured their ſouls to have attempted: They have not only ſubdued their Enemies, but their Maſters, that raiſed and maintained them; they have not only Conquered *Scotland* and *Ireland*, but Rebellious *England* too; and there ſuppreſt a Malignant Party of Magiſtrates and Laws. And that nothing ſhould be wanting to make them indeed compleat Conquerours, (without the help of Philoſophy) they have even Conquered themſelves. All ſhame they have ſubdued, as perfectly as all Juſtice; the Oathes they have taken, they have as eaſily digeſted, as their old General could himſelf; Publique Covenants and Engagements, they have trampled under foot: In concluſion, ſo intire a Victory they have over themſelves, that their Conſciences are as much their ſervants, as (Mr. *Speaker*) we are. But (Sir) give me leave to conclude with that which is more admirable then all this, and ſhews the confidence they have of themſelves and us: After having many times trampled on the Authority of the Houſe of Commons, and no leſs then five times diſſolv'd them, They hope for thoſe good ſervices to the Houſe of Commons, by the Houſe of Commons to be made a Houſe of Lords.

I have been over-long (Sir) for which I crave your pardon; therefore in a word I conclude. I beſeech you let us think it our duty to have a care of two things: Firſt, That Villanies be not encouraged with the rewards of Virtue: Secondly, That the Authority and Majeſty of the Government of this Nation be not defiled, and expoſed to contempt, by committing ſo conſiderable a part of it to Perſons of as mean Quality as Parts.

The *Thebans* did not admit Merchants into Government, till they had left their Traffick ten years: ſure 'twould have been long before Coblers and Dray-men would have been allowed. If (Sir) the wiſdom of this Houſe ſhall find it neceſſary to begin where we left, and ſhall think we have been hitherto like the Prodigal, and that now when our neceſſities perſwade us (*i.e.*) that we are almoſt brought to herd it with Swine, now 'tis high time to think of a return; Let us without more ado, without this motley mixture, even take our *Rulers as at the firſt*, ſo that we can be but reaſonably ſecured to avoid our *Counſellours as at the beginning*.

Give me leave (Sir) to releaſe your Patience with a ſhort ſtory. *Livy* tells us, There was a State in *Italy*, an Ariſtocracy, where the Nobility ſtretcht their Prerogative too high, and preſumed a little too much upon the Peoples Liberty and Patience; whereupon the diſcontents were ſo general and ſo great, that they apparently tended to a diſſolution of Government, and the turning of all things into Anarchy and Confuſion. At the ſame time, beſides theſe diſtempers at home, there was a potent Enemy ready to fall upon them from abroad, that had been an over-match for them at their beſt Union, but now in theſe diſorders, was like to find them very ready and very eaſie prey: A wiſe man (Sir) in the City, that did not at all approve of the inſolency of the Nobility, and as little liked Popular tumults, bethought himſelf of this Stratagem, to couzen his Country into ſafety. Upon a pretence of

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Counsel, he procured the Nobility to meet all together; which when they had done, he found a way to lock all the doors upon them; goes away himself, and takes the Keys with him: Then immediately he summons the People; tells them, that by a contrivance of his, he had taken all the Nobility in a Trap; That now was the time for them to be revenged upon them for all their insolencies; That therefore they should immediately go along with him and dispatch them. Sir, the Officers of our Army after a fast, could not be more ready for the villany, then this People were; And accordingly they made as much haste to the slaughter as their Lord Protector could desire them. But Sir, this wise man I told you of, was their Lord Protector indeed: As soon as he had brought the People where the Parliament was sitting, and when they but expected the word to fall to the Butchery, and take their heads; *Gentlemen*, saies he, *Though I would not care how soon this work of Reformation were over; yet in this Ship of the Commonwealth we must not throw the Steers-men over board, till we have provided others for the Helm; Let us consider before we take these men away, in what other hands we may more securely trust our Liberty, and the management of the Commonwealth.* And so he advis'd them before the putting down of the former, to bethink themselves of constituting an Other House: He begins and nominates one, a man highly cryed up in the Popular faction, a confiding man, one of much zeal, little sense, and no quality; you may suppose him (Sir) a zealous Cobler: the People in conclusion murmured at this, and were loath their fellow Mutineer, for no other virtue but Mutining, should come to be advanced to be their Master, and by their looks & murmur, sufficiently expresst the distaste they took at such a motion. Then he nominates another as mean a Mechanique as the former; you may imagine him, Sir, a bustling rude Dray-man, or the like: He was no sooner named, but some burst out a laughing, others grew angry and railed at him, and all detested and scorn'd him. Upon this a third was named for a Lordship, one of the same batch, and every way fit to sit with the other two. The People then fell into a confused laugh and noise, and enquired if such were Lords, who (by all the Gods) would be content to be the Commons?

Sir, Let me be bold (by the good leave of the Other House and yours) to ask the same Question? But Sir, to conclude this story, and with it I hope the Other House: when this wise man I told you of, perceived they were now sensible of the inconvenience and mischief they were running into, and saw that the pulling down their Rulers, would prove in the end, but the setting up of their servants; He thought them then prepar'd to hear Reason; and told them, *You see*, saith he, *That as bad as this Government is, we cannot, for any thing I see, agree upon a better: What then, if after this fright we have put our Nobility in, and the demonstration we have given them of our power, we try them once more, whether they will mend, and for the future behave themselves with more moderation?* That people (Mr. *Speaker*) were so wise as to comply with that wise Proposition, and to think it easier to mend their old Rulers, then to make New. And I wish (Mr, *Speaker*) we may be so wise to think so too.

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